

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of automatically tracking a certificate pedigree comprising:

providing a new user with a piece of hardware containing a predetermined pedigree certificate stored therein, the predetermined pedigree certificate having a level of trust commensurate with a category of hardware of which the provided piece of hardware is a member; and

providing an automated registration arrangement which can only be accessed by users having a piece of hardware containing a predetermined pedigree certificate having a specified level of trust stored therein;

wherein, upon the new user accessing the automated registration arrangement using the provided piece of hardware, the automated registration arrangement provides the new user with an individual signature certificate having a level of trust commensurate with that of the pedigree certificate and wherein the automated registration arrangement flags the new user's individual signature certificate with the level of trust of the pedigree certificate in an appropriate storage area.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing the user with at least two pieces of information, wherein, upon the new user accessing the automated registration arrangement, the automated registration arrangement requires the user to provide the at least two pieces of information prior to providing the individual signature certificate to the user.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by the automated registration arrangement in response to the user providing an additional piece of information to the automated registration arrangement.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by a personal registration authority.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by a personal registration authority.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each of the at least two pieces of information comprises one of either a PIN (Personal Identity Number) or a password.

7-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the provided piece of hardware comprises one of a personal computer or a smart card or a hardware token.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the automated registration arrangement comprises a special registration Web page.

12. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for automatically tracking a certificate pedigree comprising:

a piece of hardware containing a predetermined pedigree certificate stored therein, the predetermined pedigree certificate having a level of trust commensurate with a category of hardware of which the provided piece of hardware is a member; and

an automated registration arrangement which can only be accessed by users having a piece of hardware containing a predetermined pedigree certificate having a specified level of trust stored therein;

wherein, upon a new user accessing the automated registration arrangement using the piece of hardware, the automated registration arrangement provides the new user with an individual signature certificate having a level of trust commensurate with that of the pedigree

certificate and wherein the automated registration arrangement flags the new user's individual signature certificate with the level of trust of the pedigree certificate in an appropriate storage area.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising at least two pieces of information, wherein, upon the new user accessing the automated registration arrangement requires the user to provide the at least two pieces of information prior to providing the individual signature certificate to the user.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by the automated registration arrangement in response to the user providing an additional piece of information to the automated registration arrangement.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by a personal registration authority.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein one of the at least two pieces of information is provided to the user by a personal registration authority.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[12]]~~13, wherein each of the at least two pieces of information comprises one of either a PIN (Personal Identity Number) or a password.

18-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the piece of hardware comprises one of a personal computer or a smart card or a hardware token.

22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the automated registration arrangement comprises a special registration Web page.

23. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising signing a certificate request by the provided piece of hardware using a private key associated with the predetermined pedigree certificate to provide the new user with the individual signature certificate.

24. (New) The method of claim 23, further comprising validating that the certificate request was signed by the provided piece of hardware by verifying that the private key is associated with the predetermined pedigree certificate contained within the provided piece of hardware.

25. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the piece of hardware further comprises a private key associated with the predetermined pedigree certificate, the private key being operative to sign a certificate request to provide the new user with the individual signature certificate.

26. (New) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the certificate request is validated by a certification authority by verifying that the private key is associated with the predetermined pedigree certificate contained within the provided piece of hardware.